

FACT SHEET: MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCY MARCH, 2012

To be honest, mental health is what people need most. Just hearing people express their concerns... they have difficulty in getting care because they're not on medicine in the first place. The process gets jumbled. It takes a lot of extra effort. And motivation is lacking to go the next step and actually obtain it. It's all on top of the stress of being homeless.

April, 46 year old Tent City 3 Resident

BARRIERS TO MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCY CARE

- Patients may not feel comfortable accessing mental health care because of societal and community stigma.
- Lack of insurance coverage is perceived as a limitation to accessing mental health care.
- Women's mental health needs, often linked to physical or sexual assault, can require different approaches to care.

NEXT STEPS

1. Delegitimize barriers to care by engaging programs such as community health workers or HOPE outreach workers. The SWC is in a unique position to hear homeless women's thoughts on the effectiveness of programs such as these, especially concerning increased mental and behavioral health care, brainstorming methods to make these systems even more applicable to the community's needs.
2. Consider replicating Houston's Prison Inreach Project by exploring its applicability for Seattle's incarcerated/homeless population to determine if it belongs within the second half of the county's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness.
3. Gather additional information about what needs individuals would like addressed for substance dependency programs.

Best Practices Employed Nationally To Increase Mental Health and Substance Dependency

Best Practice Model	Employed By	Barrier(s) Addressed	Additional Benefits	Challenges	Feasibility
1. HOPE Outreach Team	Contra Costa Health Care for the Homeless: Contra Costa County, CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Trust/Credibility • Stigma: Access • Transportation: Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifts clients' perceptions of roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time intensive to build relationships • Challenging hiring process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Cost • High Staff
2. Prison Inreach Project	Houston Health Care for the Homeless: Houston, TX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Trust/Credibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces recidivism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not aid women as much as men • May attach new stigma to formerly incarcerated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Cost • High Staff